

NSC BRIEFING

10 December 1958

BERLIN SITUATION

- I. Recent Soviet statements on Berlin have been keyed to point up Kremlin reasonableness and willingness to make concessions.
  - A. Khrushchev, in his 1 December talk with Senator Humphrey, stressed his readiness to consider any Western counter-proposals, saying he would accept "anything reasonable."
  - B. He strongly emphasized similarity between his Berlin proposal and Austrian settlement.
    1. Creation of neutral Austria guaranteed by four powers, he said, removed source of conflict.
  - C. Now Soviet Union has unofficially hinted that it would agree to including East sector in "free city."
    1. This statement was made by Soviet Ambassador <sup>in Belgrade</sup> Zamchenski to several Western colleagues <sup>there</sup> in Belgrade. He said Soviets would agree to UN control over access routes and would move East German capital elsewhere.
    2. This plan also been leaked to West German press as idea originating with Poles.
    3. These "leaks" are probably intended to stir up disunity in West over this issue. West Berlin's Mayor Brandt said on 5 December that he would accept free city, with East Berlin, as "last resort."

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D. Meanwhile, East Germans are asserting that no change in Allied access will come about after they take over controls, nor will Berlin population suffer any adverse effect.

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I. [redacted] East Germans do not want to take actions that would compound West Berliners' bitterness toward East.

II. Khrushchev also stressed, however, while talking to Humphrey, that he was determined to settle Berlin situation on Soviet terms.

A. Berlin, K said, "is bone in my throat," and warned of "very serious situation" if Western forces were kept in West Berlin.  
B. He said USSR was determined to transfer controls to East Germans if West rejected Soviet "free city" plan.

III. East Germans and Poles now meeting in Warsaw will probably reaffirm permanence and inviolability of Oder-Neisse Line.

A. Poles have been reported fearful of implications for border of Soviet threat to abrogate Potsdam Agreement.

IV. West Berlin electorate on 7 December decisively defeated Communists while giving unprecedented high vote (89.4%) to the two major non-Communist parties.

A. Press has interpreted vote as defeat of Soviet "free city" proposal. This may be useful as propaganda for us, but West Berliners are so anti-Communist results would probably have been the same if Khrushchev's proposal had not been made.

B. Communist defeat came despite "waves" of agitators sent in from East Germany to spread propaganda and stir up support.

I. US Mission Berlin reports Commies spent more money than any other party.

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C. Communist Party (SED) got only 1.9% of vote (2.7% in 1954) and failed to exceed 5% of vote even in the workers' districts, where they had high hopes of 5% or better.

1. Communists again failed to capture seats in City Assembly as well as smaller district assemblies.

V. The 52% majority rolled up by Social Democrats (SPD) is personal victory for Mayor Willy Brandt.

A. Brandt widely regarded as only SPD official of "Chancellor caliber," and is capable of succeeding colorless SPD leader Ollenhauer.

B. Brandt strongly pro-West and pro-US. His foreign policy views coincide more often with Adenauer than with SPD, *but some coolness out of election campaign.*

1. He has rebuked Adenauer's recent campaign tactics in Berlin, however.

C. Brandt has reputation as a "compromiser," is Berlin's most popular leader since the late Ernst Reuter.

D. Brandt to join West German delegation for Paris NATO meeting (14 December) as gesture of unity on Berlin.

1. Brandt on 5 December said he would accept "free city" with East Berlin as "last resort." Since then, however, he has moved closer to Adenauer's position.

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ANNEX - 1

WEST BERLIN ELECTION, 7 December 1954

<u>Party</u>	<u>Percentage (1954 result in Parense)</u>	<u>Assembly Seats (previous Assembly in Parense)</u>
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	52.1	(44.6) 78 (63)
Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	37.3	(30.4) 55 (42)
Free Democratic Party (FDP)	3.8	(12.8) 0 (1.2)
Socialist Unity (Communist) Party (SED)	1.9	( 2.7) 0 ( 0)
Others	4.9	( 9.6) 0 ( 0)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>(100.0) 133 (127)</b>